



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 1, 2021

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator *[Signature]*

Re: COVID-19 Update for the July 6, 2021 Board of Supervisors Meeting

Public Health Protocols for Returning to In-Person Meetings

During the June 22, 2021 Board of Supervisors Meeting, the Board discussed returning to in-person meetings as of the public meeting scheduled for August 16, 2021. During the discussion, there was some question regarding what public health protocols would be appropriate for these in-person public meetings.

I discussed this matter with both Deputy County Administrator/Chief Medical Officer Dr. Francisco Garcia and Health Department Director Dr. Theresa Cullen. Their recommendation is to use the same protocols that will go into effect in County buildings on July 5, 2021. These are as follows:

- if a person is sick they must not enter the building
- if a person is vaccinated they are not required to wear a mask or practice physical distancing
- frequent hand washing and other hygiene practices should be observed
- if one is unvaccinated, you are required to wear a mask in the building and follow physical distancing and hygiene protocols

In addition, there will be provisions made for unvaccinated individuals to attend the meetings and participate through the lobby of the Administration Building. Seating will be provided at the standard distance of 6 feet apart and masking will be required for these attendees.

At this time, we are not inclined to require proof of vaccination to enter the Hearing Room. I believe this is a matter that should be left to the Board of Supervisors.

Board members who are fully vaccinated which I believe all of you are, will not be required to wear a mask and may sit at their positions on the dais. There will be no plexiglass barriers between Board members. The plexiglass barrier at the podium will remain in place for the time being and the occupancy limit of the Board Hearing Room will return to its previous Fire Code requirement.

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Regarding the actual protocols for in-person meeting, the Board may set whatever standards the majority desires. Previously in this memorandum I have provided the recommendation of our public health officials.

Finally, since this memorandum is being issued for the July 6, 2021 meeting, and the first in-person meeting is August 16, 2021, conditions may change over time. If so, I will update the Board of Supervisors.

Vaccination progress and the shift to mobile/pop-up vaccination events

Pima County continues to make steady progress in terms of vaccination coverage. This is particularly important since increasingly we are noting that COVID hospitalizations and deaths in this community are occurring overwhelmingly among the unvaccinated segment of the population. Updated information is made available to the public on the Pima County vaccine dashboard that is collaboratively updated and maintained by the Health and Information Technology departments. This tool allows the user to view vaccination information by census tract, zip code, jurisdiction, school district and supervisor district. Attachment A is a [map](#) of first dose vaccinations among adults and by census tract.

Our shift from large scale fixed PODs to mobile pop-up vaccination efforts has proven successful and is the reason why we continue to see increasing numbers especially in vulnerable census tracts. At this time the Health Department and its partners have conducted approximately 424 vaccination events in places as diverse as churches, parks, libraries, schools, work sites, outside of bars and even the zoo. What is notable about these community-based efforts located in higher risk census tracts is that we appear to be making significant inroads with low-income and vulnerable communities. Our most recent assessment of the race/ethnicity of the populations served by our mobile efforts confirm that 37 percent are White (non-Hispanic), 47 percent are Hispanic, 4 percent African American, and 1.3 percent American Indian. Only 7 percent of the population declined to self-identify.

As vaccine becomes more available, residents are increasingly turning to their own health care providers for vaccination. We see this with the tremendous growth in vaccines distributed at retail pharmacies, federally qualified community health centers as well as pediatric and primary care practices. Currently there are 170 active providers that are state-qualified to receive vaccine doses. (Attachment B)

Based on our progress, we expect in the very near future to exceed the President's target of 70 percent first dose vaccination among the adult population. The number (and percent) of first dose and fully vaccinated population 18 years of age and older in Pima County (per the CDC Data Tracker accessed on July 1) are highlighted in the table below.

| | First Dose | Fully Vaccinated |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Pima County | 579,249 (69.6%) | 509,896 (61.3%) |
| Arizona | 3,499,678 (62.1%) | 3,008,567 (53.4%) |
| United States | 172,295,929 (66.7%) | 149,112,608 (57.7%) |

Overall COVID cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are declining in Pima County. (Attachment C). Concern about COVID infections occurring among vaccinated persons has been getting some attention in the press. The County has been tracking this issue. As of our last analysis on June 18, the Health Department has identified 317 breakthrough cases out of 479,059 fully vaccinated individuals, or 0.066 percent. As part of this monitoring, the department is looking at the distribution of viral variants among this group. However, no significant pattern has been identified to date.

Emerging Variants

Since January communities across the U.S. have begun to detect the viral variants. Despite our substantial success in vaccination the emerging genetic various variants of COVID-19 are increasingly a concern. The alpha variant (originally identified in the UK) has now become the predominant variant in the country and in Arizona. More recently scientists have identified delta variant (originally identified in India) as the emergent dominant variant across the globe. The concern about COVID variants is rooted in the observation that some appear to be more easily transmitted and in some cases more likely to lead to serious hospitalization and death. There are indications that the wave of infections now being experienced in certain communities across the U.S. is being driven by the delta variant.

Since January 1 of this year the Health Department began systematically forwarding positive COVID-19 test specimens to the state for whole genome sequencing variant analysis. As of this week, Pima County had sent 1,043 (of 34,111) specimens to the state laboratory and its contractor TGEN as part of our ongoing surveillance process. Variants of Concern or Variants of Interest have been identified in 54 percent of the Pima County specimens. Among these, the alpha variant was identified in more than half (318) of the sequenced cases identified in Pima County. Of concern is the identification of the seven cases (representing 0.8 percent) of the delta variant in the last two months. Currently the health department continues its surveillance COVID of variants in collaboration with the state, and we are now submitting 10 percent of all positive specimen in Pima County for this type of testing.

Hospital Capacity

With rapid vaccine uptake we have seen consistent dramatic improvements in hospital capacity. The number of inpatient medical surgical beds occupied by COVID positive patients hit a high of just over 750 on January 7, coinciding with the overall surge in cases that

month. This dropped to the low 70s by mid-April. The overall acuity of COVID patients has also improved dramatically. On January 11 of this year, nearly 68 percent of intensive care beds were occupied by COVID patients, now that figure hovers around 5 percent. (Attachment D)

Consistent with national trends, the overwhelming majority of COVID hospital admissions are occurring among individuals who have not yet been vaccinated. The Health Department conservatively estimates that at least 95 percent of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in Pima County are unvaccinated. The CDC Director reported earlier today that their latest monitoring data suggests that 99.5 percent of COVID deaths across the country involve unvaccinated individuals. We have reached the point where major complications and deaths are largely preventable.

New Public Health Advisory

Dr. Cullen has issued an updated public health advisory. This document provides a general update of the pandemic in our community, discusses the emerging concerns regarding variants, and reinforces recommendations that all the community should observe. (Attachment E). It bears repeating that most individuals who are fully vaccinated can resume most of the activities they were enjoying prior to the pandemic. Likewise, the Health Department continues to advise common sense behaviors including staying home when sick, covering your cough, frequent handwashing, and avoiding crowded poorly ventilated indoor spaces. Most importantly however, it continues to urge individuals who are unvaccinated or those who have not completed their series to do so as soon as possible (unless there is a history of vaccine allergy) and to continue to mask in order to avoid being impacted by COVID-19 and its variants.

Conclusion

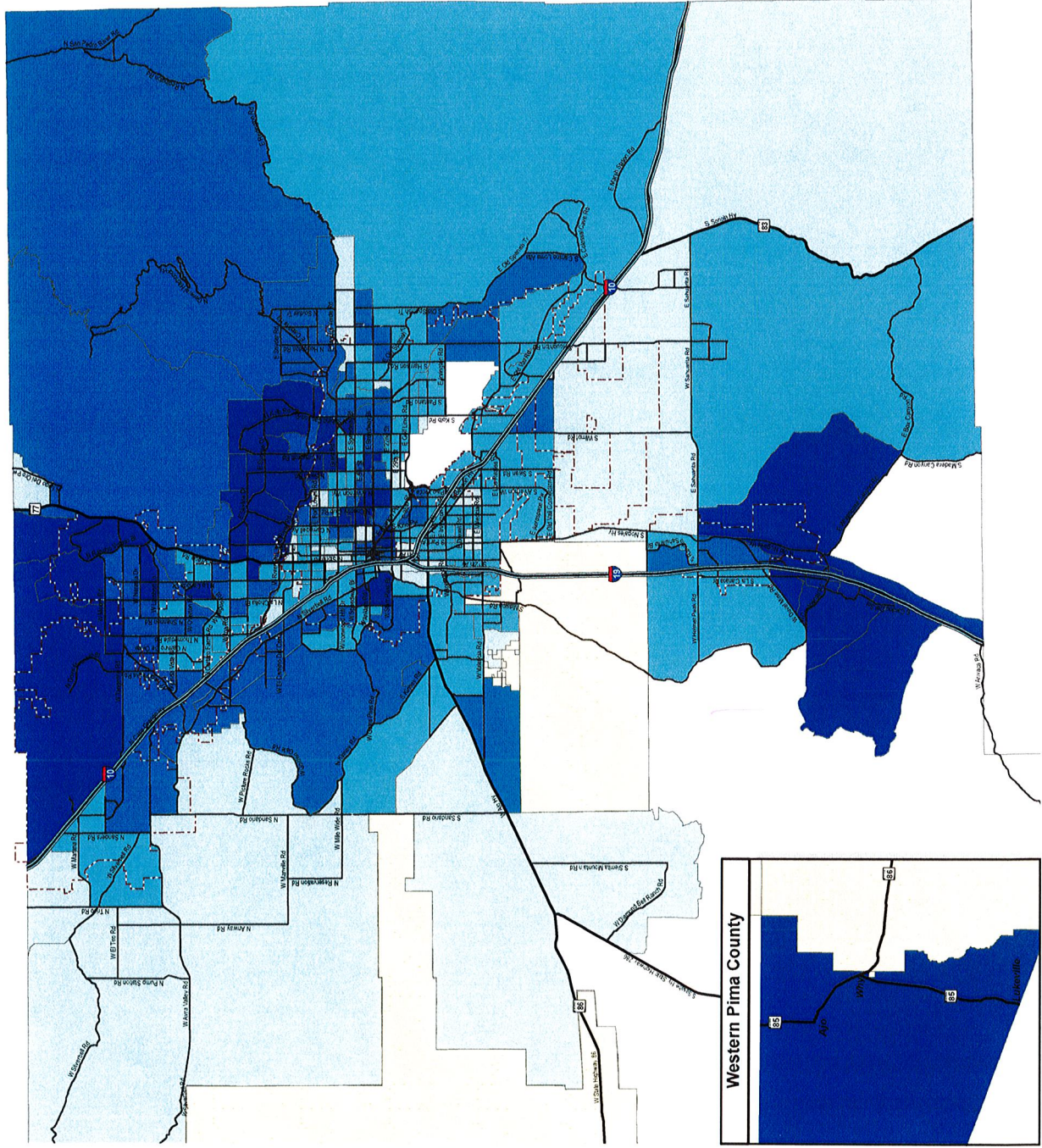
We expect to see a revocation of the Governor's Emergency Declaration at some point in the future. It may be appropriate for the Board to consider lifting our own emergency declaration language. (See draft Proclamation Attachment F). Doing so not to signal that the pandemic is over in Pima County, but rather to call attention to the fact that we are moving into a new phase of baseline sustained lower levels of infection among unvaccinated individuals. It is this residual unvaccinated population that will continue to be the focus of the Health Department's continued efforts.

Attachments

- c: Jan Leshar, Chief Deputy County Administrator
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator & Chief Medical Officer,
Health and Community Services
Theresa Cullen, MD, MS, Director, Health Department

ATTACHMENT A

Rate of COVID-19 Vaccinations by Census Tract Through June 29 (Percentage of Tract Population Age 18 and Over that has Received at least First Dose)



ATTACHMENT B

Cumulative COVID-19 Vaccine Administered (as of the morning of 06/24/2021)

| REGIONAL | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Facility | Total Vaccinated 06/16/21 | Total Vaccinated 06/24/21 | Vaccinations Administered Since Last Reporting Period |
| Tucson Medical Center | 135,331 | 135,955 | 624 |
| Banner South | 111,520 | 111,512 | -8 |
| Banner North | 41,085 | 41,113 | 28 |
| Tucson Convention Center | 86,332 | 86,282 | -6 |
| University of Arizona | 225,216 | 226,113 | 897 |
| SJM Premier Medical Group | 30,931 | 32,066 | 1,135 |
| Paradigm Laboratories - Ajo Way | 11,854 | 13,009 | 1,155 |
| DISTRIBUTED | | | |
| El Rio Health Center | 22,262 | 23,263 | 1,001 |
| Desert Senita CHC | 2,621 | 2,669 | 48 |
| United CHC | 11,978 | 12,018 | 40 |
| Marana Healthcare | 19,950 | 20,126 | 176 |
| Northwest Medical Center | 2,814 | 2,859 | 45 |
| Carondelet Medical Group | 2,741 | 2,864 | 123 |
| Arizona Community Physicians | 2,303 | 2,346 | 43 |
| RETAIL PHARMACIES | | | |
| CVS | 68,007 | 71,009 | 3,002 |
| Walgreens | 69,760 | 74,012 | 4,252 |
| Fry's Pharmacy | 31,035 | 32,201 | 1,166 |
| Safeway | 26,766 | 27,338 | 572 |
| Albertsons/Osco | 9,248 | 9,579 | 331 |
| Wal-mart Pharmacy | 16,901 | 17,649 | 748 |
| Costco | 2,574 | 2,704 | 130 |
| Bashas' United Drug | 640 | 657 | 17 |
| Food City United Drug | 120 | 127 | 7 |
| Other | 1,388 | 1,483 | 95 |
| OTHER & OTHER FIRE DEPARTMENT | | | |
| Tohono O'Odham Nation | 13,906 | 14,128 | 222 |
| Other Fire Departments | 5,864 | 5,860 | -4 |
| Green Valley/Drexel Heights Fire District | 5,688 | 5,684 | -4 |
| Correctional | 4,944 | 4,991 | 47 |
| Dialysis | 1,725 | 1,733 | 8 |
| Other | 13,381 | 13,865 | 484 |
| Grand Total | 973,196 | 989,531 | |

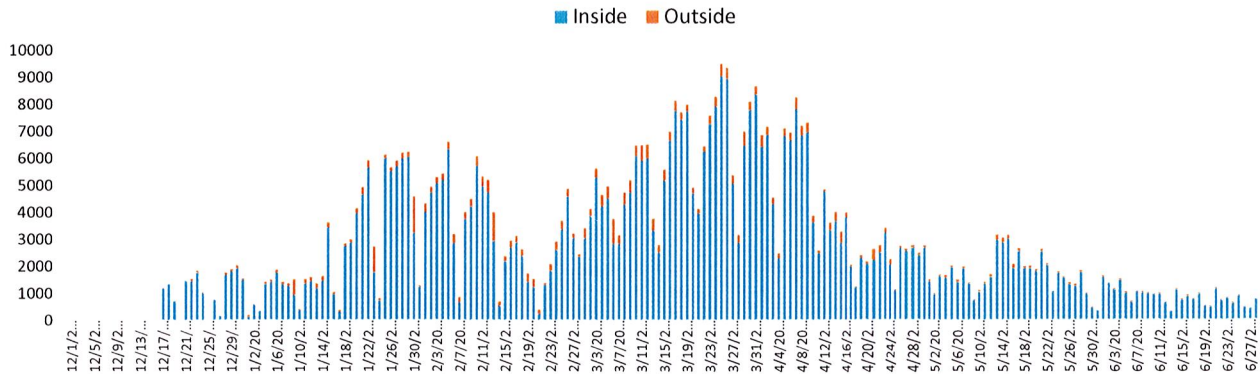
Pima County COVID-19 Vaccination Report

June 30, 2021

Total doses administered to Pima County residents: 1,072,158*

As of June 28, 2021, a total of 577,160 (55.25%) Pima County residents have received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. A total of 540,764 residents were vaccinated by a local provider in Pima County ("inside") and 36,396 residents were vaccinated by a provider outside of the county ("outside"). Note, dates that don't appear in graphs had zero vaccinations. *Total number of vaccine doses administered to Pima County residents by all vaccine providers.

Pima County First Dose Vaccinations by Date and by Location of Service



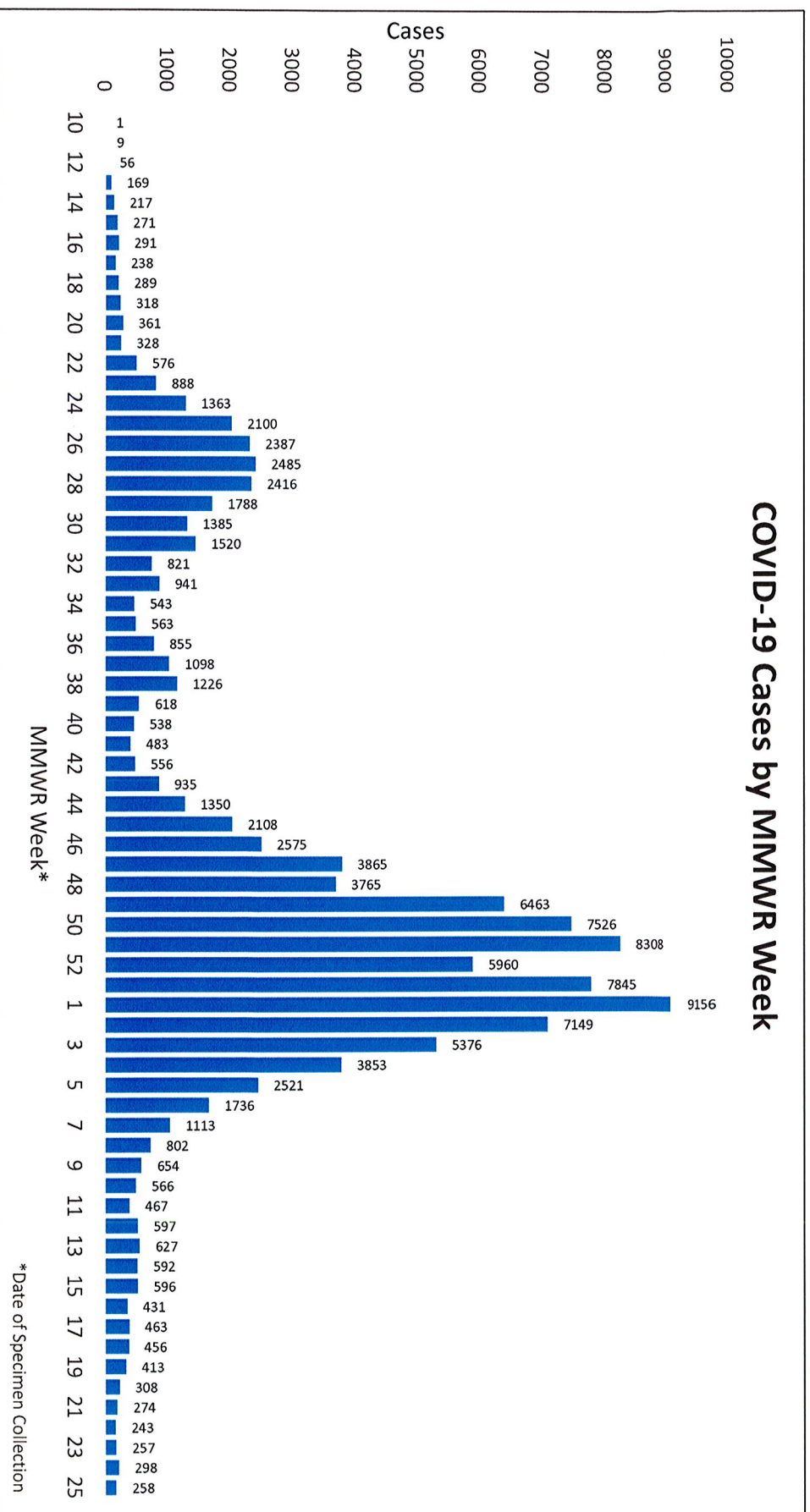
First Time Vaccinated Residents by Gender and Age Group

| | Number vaccinated | % of residents vaccinated | 2019 pop. size | % of total pop. | % of age group |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Residents vaccinated | 577,160 | | 1,044,675 | 55% | |
| Gender | | | | | |
| Female | 314,428 | 54% | 530,457 | 51% | |
| Male | 261,385 | 45% | 514,218 | 49% | |
| Unknown | 1,347 | 0% | | | |
| Age group | | | | | |
| 0-9 | 0 | 0% | 118,576 | 11% | 0% |
| 10-14 | 11,491 | 2% | 62,299 | 6% | 18% |
| 15 - 19 | 29,060 | 5% | 69,243 | 7% | 42% |
| 20 - 29 | 72,182 | 13% | 164,060 | 16% | 44% |
| 30 - 39 | 71,948 | 12% | 122,736 | 12% | 59% |
| 40 - 49 | 71,542 | 12% | 114,326 | 11% | 63% |
| 50 - 59 | 81,748 | 14% | 121,325 | 12% | 67% |
| 60 - 69 | 104,176 | 18% | 128,571 | 12% | 81% |
| 70 - 79 | 90,352 | 16% | 93,065 | 9% | 97% |
| 80+ | 44,648 | 8% | 50,474 | 5% | 88% |
| Unknown | 13 | 0% | | | 0% |

ATTACHMENT C

Pima County COVID-19 Deaths, Cases, and Hospitalizations Report

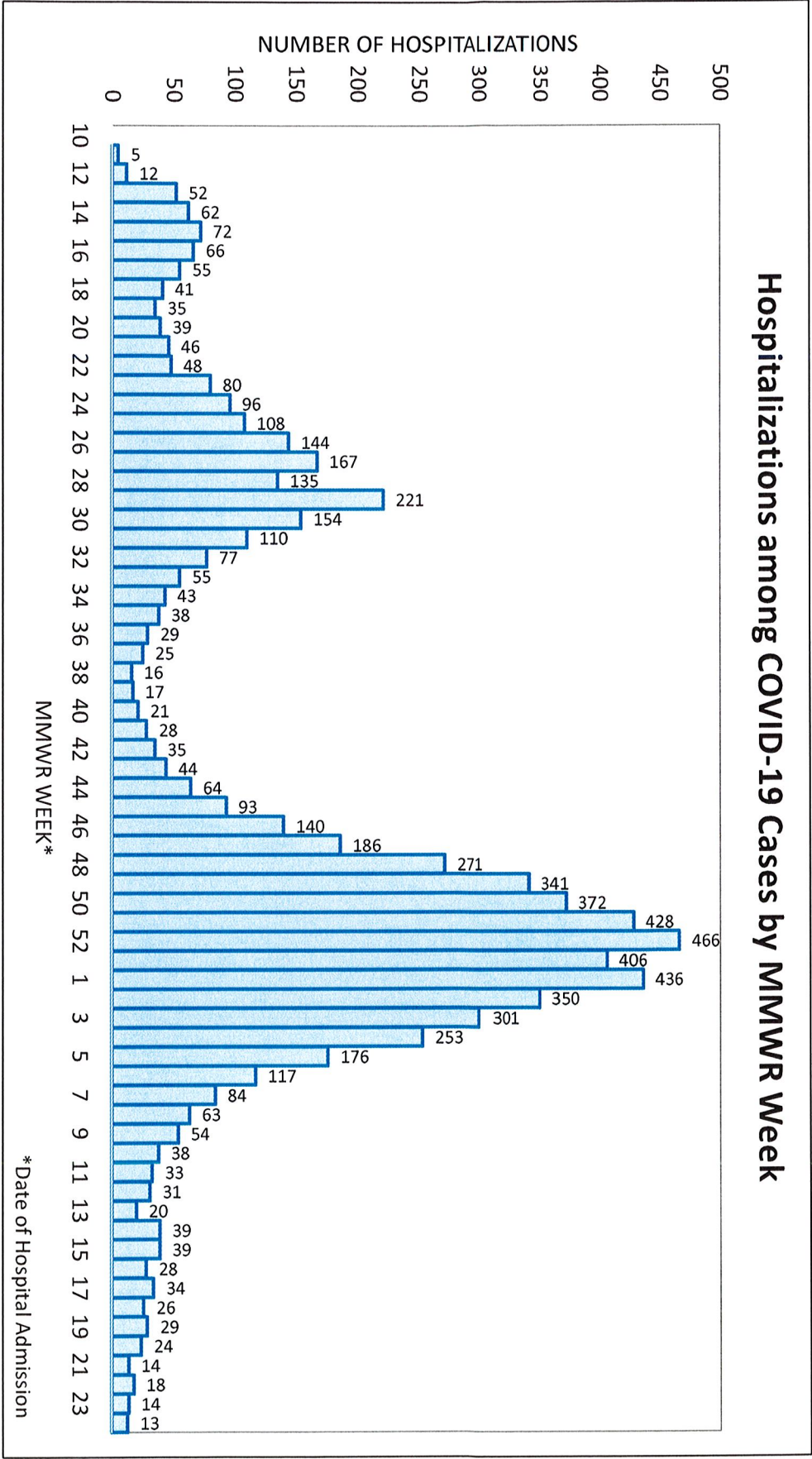
Chart 1: Pima County COVID-19 cases by MMWR Week



***Note:** Illnesses in the last 4-7 days may not be reported yet

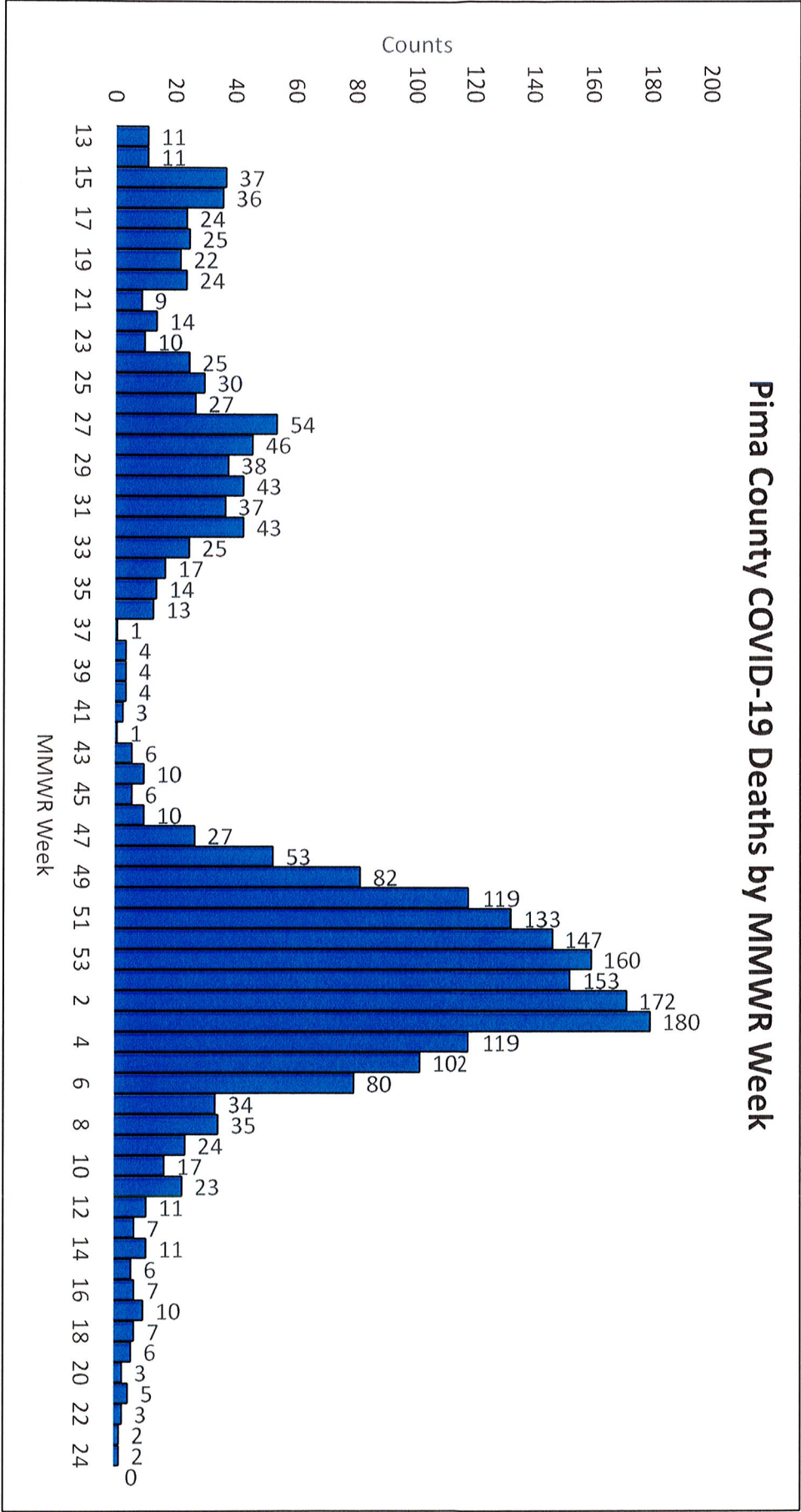
Updated: 6/28/2021

Chart 2: Pima County COVID-19 cases that are hospitalized by MMWR Week



**Note: Recent hospitalizations may not be reported yet.

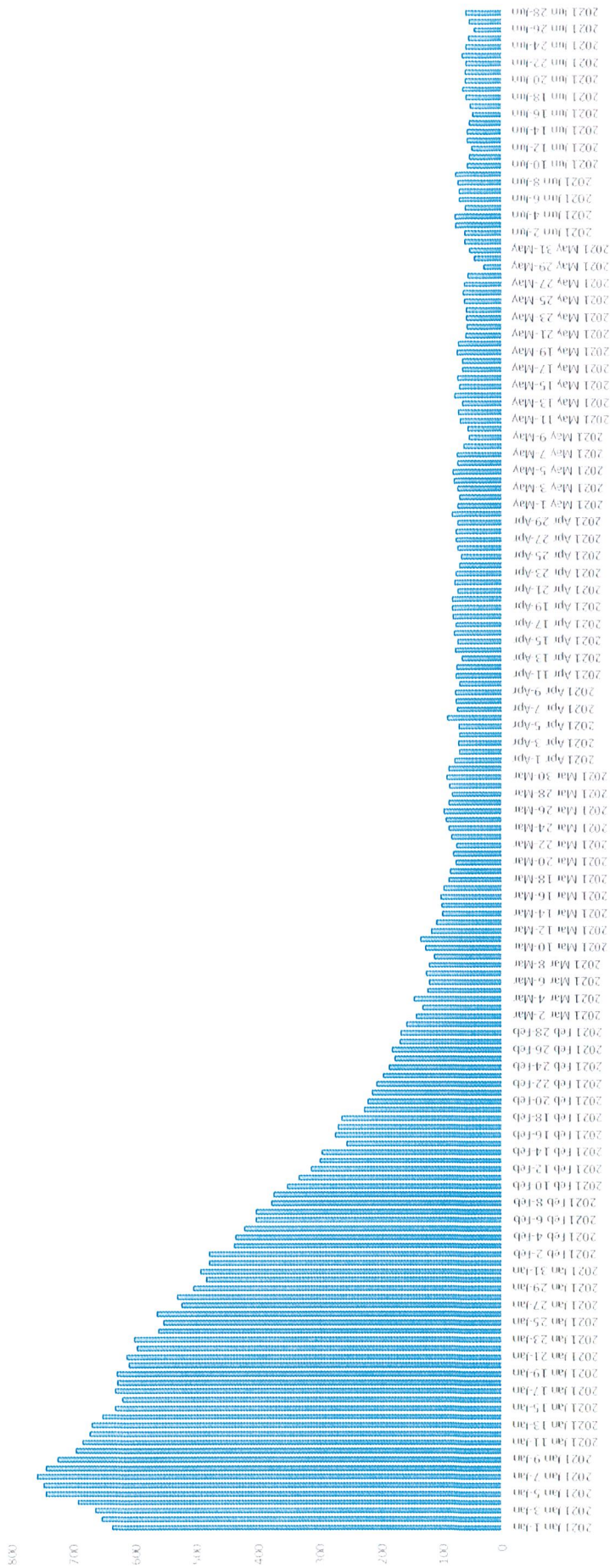
Chart 3: Pima County COVID-19 deaths by MMWR Week



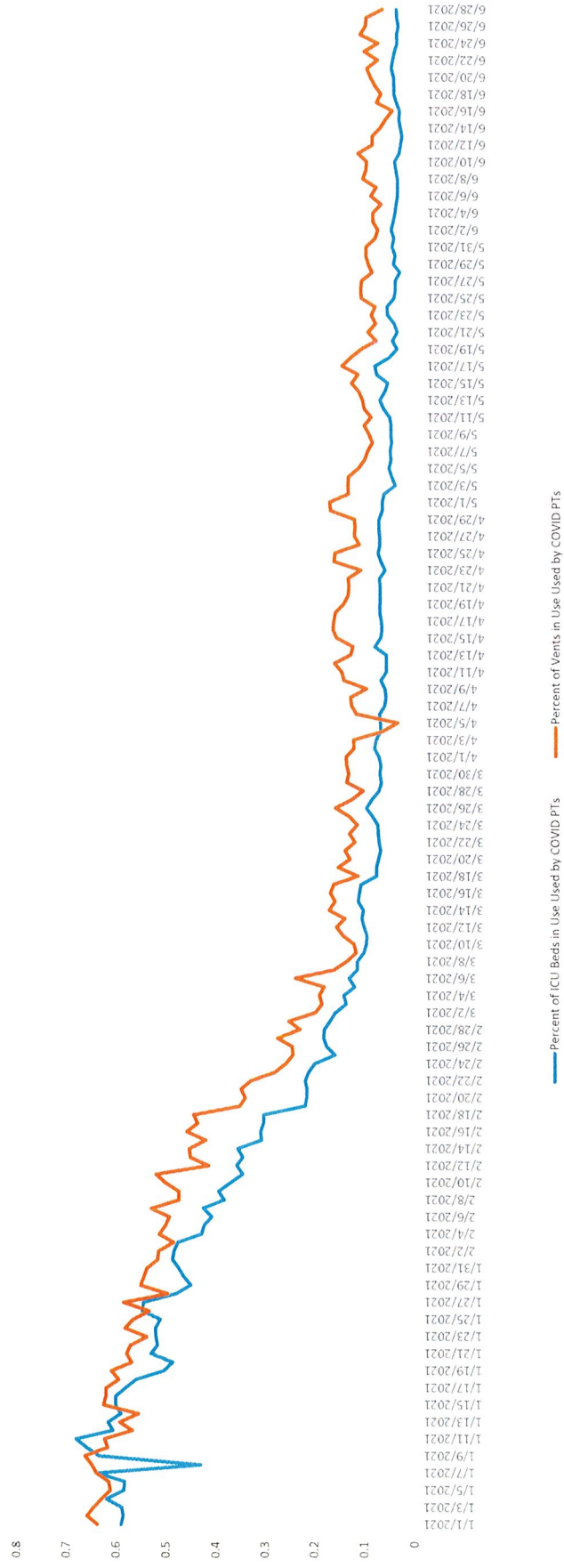
****Note:** Recent deaths may not be reported yet.

ATTACHMENT D

COVID-19 Positive Inpatients in Pima County



Percent ICU Beds & Vents Used by COVIDPTs



ATTACHMENT E



Public Health Advisory Update COVID-19

Updated July 1, 2021

This is a rapidly evolving situation. The public health advisory will be updated when critical new information and recommendations are needed.

The Pima County Health Department (PCHD) is committed to ensuring that our community is able to safely resume the variety of activities previously experienced before the pandemic. This update to the May 14, 2021, Public Health Advisory (PHA) provides a status update of the pandemic in Pima County, including the latest on vaccination efforts, disease situation, and ongoing recommendations to reduce the impact of COVID-19. The Department will continue to provide Public Health Advisory Updates that are informed by an analysis of increasing data and knowledge about COVID-19.

What We Know

COVID-19 is highly contagious and spreads primarily through person-to-person contact. Significant community and individual adherence to mitigation recommendations as well as high vaccination rates have been demonstrated to decrease illness and death. Genetic variants are increasingly common across the U.S., and the alpha variant has become the dominant variant in the state and Pima County. These emerging variants are significant since some are more transmissible and may be associated with serious complications, hospitalization and even death.

There have been over 117,783 COVID-19 cases diagnosed in Pima County as of June 30, 2021. More than 2,427 deaths have been attributed to COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic, an increase of 20 deaths since May 13. **More than one out of every 450 residents** of Pima County have died due to COVID-19. The availability of clinical services, hospital beds and timely epidemiological response continues to improve across Pima County.

Since May, PCHD has submitted approximately 10 percent of positive PCR tests to the state for sequencing. In Pima County at this time the alpha variant has been sequenced from 285 cases and the delta variant from two cases.

Clinical COVID-19 testing continues to be available at no cost in the county at [Pima County COVID-19 Testing Centers - Pima County](#)

COVID-19 Response Updates

Vaccination

- As of June 30, 2021, over 597,000 residents of Pima County have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccines at numerous locations throughout the state, including the state POD. This is an increase of 86,000 vaccinations since May 14; over 57% of the population 18 or older are fully vaccinated. Over 80.6% of people 65 and over have been fully vaccinated.
- The Pima County Vaccine Data Dashboard with further information about vaccination rates in Pima County is available at <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#county-view>
- Fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and to transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others. In the event of infection, vaccinated individuals are less likely to develop severe disease, require hospitalization or die.
- Anyone 12 years or older can receive the Pfizer-BioTech COVID-19 vaccine in Pima County. Pima County Health Clinics have COVID-19 vaccines available at no cost. Further information on vaccine availability is at www.pima.gov/covid19vaccine
- In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:
 - 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines
 - 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine
 - If you don't meet these requirements, regardless of your age, you are NOT fully vaccinated and should continue to wear a mask and take other precautions
- At this time, over 95% of people diagnosed with COVID-19 are unvaccinated.

Therapeutics

- Combination monoclonal antibody therapies remain available in Pima County under Emergency Use Authorization. Information is available www.pima.gov/covid19mab and <https://www.covid19treatmentguidelines.nih.gov/statement-on-bamlanivimab-plus-etesevimab-eua/>.

COVID-19 Mitigation Measures

- **Face Coverings**
 - Anyone who is fully vaccinated can participate in indoor and outdoor activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing.
 - Fully vaccinated residents and employees of correctional facilities, homeless shelters, congregate living facilities and health care facilities or people on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and in transportation hubs such as airports, bus, train or other transit stations should still wear a mask.
 - Fully vaccinated individuals who are immune compromised, including those undergoing transplant or cancer treatment, should seek the guidance of their clinical care team before discontinuing mask use.
 - Individuals who are unvaccinated and those not fully vaccinated should continue to wear masks and maintain 6 feet distancing until they are fully vaccinated.
 - People who are vaccinated and develop symptoms of COVID-19 should resume mask use and get tested for COVID-19.
 - Regardless of vaccination status, correct use of well-fitted face coverings may be required by businesses, health care facilities, public transportation or other entities that serve the public.

Maintenance of Public Health Mitigation Measures

- PCHD recommends the following of mitigation measures be continued by all:
 - Stay home when sick with a fever, cough, or other COVID-19 symptoms
 - Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or fabric or, if not possible, into their sleeve or elbow (but not into hands)
 - Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer
 - Avoid poorly ventilated and crowded spaces

Reporting

- Reporting of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 cases to **Pima County Health Department** continues to be required for schools, businesses, and government entities if individuals test positive for COVID-19 and were present in the workplace or school within the 48 hours prior to onset of symptoms or testing.
- Entities should instruct employees, staff or students to adhere to isolation and quarantine protocols specified by the County and exclude positive cases and close contacts from the school or workplace during the isolation or quarantine periods.

School and Childcare Settings

- PCHD strongly recommends that children who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in school in accordance with the current CDC guidance.
- Teachers, school administrators, and staff should continue to follow CDC's school guidance.
- The school dashboard indicates that Pima County is considered to have moderate transmission as of this date; data is available at <https://www.azdhs.gov/covid19/index.php#schools-dashboard>
- The Health Department continues to support schools and districts in implementing strong layered mitigation strategies as a part of their return to learning.

County Response Priorities for 2021

Pima County supports a strong community recovery and we are committed to:

- Continuing to ensure COVID-19 testing and vaccine availability at no cost throughout the community.

- Advancing health equity and access to services for our diverse community.
- Enhancing public health infrastructure.
- Increasing engagement with Pima County residents.
- Supporting individuals and families impacted by COVID-19.

The Pima County Health Department helps to guide the COVID-19 response and recommend appropriate layered mitigation that should help minimize COVID-19 transmission and save lives. PCHD recognizes the ongoing strain associated with the COVID-19 pandemic on individual lives as well as our educational institutions, businesses and community. PCHD remains grateful for the County residents' cooperation and commitment to wellness.

ATTACHMENT F

**PROCLAMATION OF THE PIMA COUNTY BOARD
OF SUPERVISORS REGARDING THE COVID-19
OUTBREAK, TERMINATING THE STATE OF
EMERGENCY DECLARED MARCH 19, 2020**

The Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona finds:

1. On March 19, 2020, the Pima County Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No. 2020-18, declaring an emergency or local emergency to exist in unincorporated Pima County related to the COVID-19 outbreak and adopting the orders contained in an accompanying Proclamation issued the same day.
2. Section 2 of Resolution No. 2020-18 authorized and empowered the Chairman of the Pima County Board of Supervisors to govern by proclamation, as authorized by A.R.S. § 26-311, in consultation with the County Administrator and Chief Medical Officer, as provided in the Proclamation accompanying Resolution No. 2020-18.
3. Since the pandemic began, over 117,500 COVID-19 cases have been diagnosed in Pima County and 2,424 deaths have been attributed to COVID-19.
4. The availability of clinical services, hospital beds and timely epidemiological response to COVID-19 continues to improve across Pima County. As of June 25, 2021, over 593,000 residents of Pima County have received COVID-19 vaccines at numerous locations throughout the state, including the state POD.
5. Over 68.5% of the Pima County population 18 or older have received at least a single dose of vaccine and 57.1% are now fully vaccinated. Over 80% of people 65 and over have been fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated people are less likely to have asymptomatic infection and to be able to transmit SARS-CoV-2 to others.
6. The three available vaccines are more than 90% effective at protecting fully vaccinated individuals from COVID-19 infection, hospitalization and death. Moreover breakthrough infections following full vaccination are estimated to be 0.066% and extremely rare.
7. The Health Department conservatively estimates that 95% of COVID-19 related hospitalizations are occurring among unvaccinated persons.

8. The Pima County Board of Supervisors has determined that, in light of the progress that has been made in addressing the COVID-19 outbreak in Pima County, it is appropriate to terminate the state of emergency declared on March 19, 2020.
9. Although the acute phase of the pandemic appears to be over, COVID-19 still presents a substantial risk to public health. Since May 13, 2021, 17 deaths in Pima County have been attributed to COVID-19. Genetic variants that are more transmissible and may be associated with serious complications, hospitalization, and even death have been identified in Pima County.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED, EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Resolution No. 2020-18 and the Proclamation dated March 19, 2020, are hereby rescinded.

SECTION 2. The state of emergency declared on March 19, 2020 is terminated.

SECTION 3. Pima County residents and visitors are strongly urged to get vaccinated as soon as possible, if they have not already done so and in the absence of a vaccine allergy. The community is also asked to continue following the recommendations of the Health Department memorialized in its COVID-19 Public Health Advisory Updates.

PROCLAIMED at _____ this ____ day of _____, 2021.

Sharon Bronson
Chair, Pima County Board of Supervisors

ATTEST:

Julie Castañeda
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Jonathan Pinkney
Deputy County Attorney